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# The Red Owl

TABLOID MELODRAMA  
IN ONE ACT

BY  
WILLIAM GILLETTE



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(In One-Act Plays for Stage and Study, First Series)

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# THE RED OWL

TABLOID MELODRAMA IN ONE ACT

## WILLIAM GILLETTE

William Gillette was born at Hartford, Connecticut, in 1855. Although he took an interest in the theater at a comparatively early age, he managed to receive an education at Yale, Harvard, and the Massachusetts Fine Arts Institute. Since 1875, when he made his *début* as an actor, he has followed the professions of actor, manager and playwright. His more successful work has been in his own plays, chiefly "Sherlock Holmes," "Secret Service," and "Held by the Enemy," and with his own extraordinarily successful adaptation of "The Private Secretary." The only published one-acter of Mr. Gillette's is "The Red Owl," here printed for the first time. It was very popular on the vaudeville stage for a number of years.

As a playwright Mr. Gillette has achieved distinction through an extraordinary ability to construct tense and moving dramas. "Secret Service" and "Held by the Enemy" are among the very few successful Civil War plays this country has produced.

Following is a list of Mr. Gillette's published plays: "Held by the Enemy," "Esmeralda," "All the Comforts of Home," "Secret Service," "Sherlock Holmes," "Too Much Johnson," "Electricity," "The Red Owl."

References: Montrose J. Moses, "The American Dramatist;" Richard Burton, "The New American Drama;" Barrett H. Clark, "The British and American Drama of Today."

# THE RED OWL\*

## CHARACTERS

HERBERT BRANDT

DOROTHY BRANDT

EDWARD VOSBERG

CHARLES

POLICEMAN

SCENE: *The hall of the Brandts' house in a Suburban District of New York.*

TIME: *The present.*

*A large hall of a suburban house, handsomely decorated. Rich furniture of elegant appearance, with dark rich tones. No light or glaring colors. Dark reds prevailing. Woodwork heavy and dark like mahogany or dark oak.*

*Fireplace on right side well down with large mantel richly carved. A coal fire burning—throwing a strong red light. A door up Right above the fireplace, opening to a back hall-way.*

*Stairway up Right leading to a landing. A balustrade above, where the stairway lands.*

*Large window at Left well up—and obliqued. This is a French window, and extends down to floor.*

*The large front door of the house is at left below the window, and well down stage.*

*Cases with drawers, etc., up Center. A large red owl on a pedestal on one of them, so that it is well elevated and near enough to be in plain sight. Electric effect*

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to give a subdued glow to the owl's eyes—not too pronounced or unnatural, but as if it might be the reflection of the fire with an added greenish tinge. A high clock on the landing with a slow and very loud tick, the hands started at a quarter to one at rise of curtain.

A table to the Right of Center with a few books and magazines on it, and a revolver of good calibre.

A small table or stand down Left of Center, near front, on which is a handsome tea service including a burning alcohol flame under hot water kettle. Also a plate of dainty sandwiches.

A built-in lounge or settee above the fireplace and up under stairway or in front of it, making a comfortable fireplace seat or lounge with cushions, etc.

The room is only about half lighted, so that the red glow from fire will strike across. The lights increase gradually for about two minutes after the curtain rises.

HERBERT BRANDT is seated by the side of the table at Right of Center—red glow from fire upon him. His face is toward the front—the table upon his right, between him and the fire. There is a revolver upon the table, with a silver name-plate on it. A leather satchel with straps to go over shoulders—the kind used to carry valuables—lies conspicuously on table by his side. He has a large packet securely tied up and sealed, grasped firmly in his hands. He sits motionless, his eyes staring straight before him. The clock ticks slowly. There is a strange luminous glow in the owl's eyes. In BRANDT's a fixed look of tense anxiety. He then fingers the packet nervously. Slight noise off stage—BRANDT starts slightly and instantly becomes alert, and, keeping his eyes on the French windows he nervously and hastily places the packet in the leather satchel on table. Fumbles for revolver, all the while keeping eyes to the left. He gets hold of the revolver and rises with it in his hand ready for instant use. Slight pause as he looks keenly. Then he cautiously crosses toward left,

*and goes to upper side of French windows. He cautiously draws the portieres back a little and looks into the garden, all the while holding the revolver ready. Slight pause. He starts to recross to table. Pauses. Turns head toward door down, Left. Cautiously goes down Left and satisfies himself that the door is securely locked.*

*Sound of a door closing heavily outside. BRANDT starts and turns instantly. He stands with revolver grasped in right hand, not aimed but ready. Sound of approaching footsteps outside. Crosses close to door up Right.*

BRANDT. Who's there!

CHARLES. (*Outside*) May I come in, sir?

BRANDT. Who is it?

CHARLES. (*At door up Right*) It's Charles, sir—the butler.

BRANDT. Is that you Charles?

CHARLES. (*Coming into room and standing near the door.*) Yes, sir!

BRANDT. What are you doing here?

CHARLES. I—I came back, sir—(*Hesitates*).

BRANDT. What for?—What did you come back for?

CHARLES. I came back to see if—if you was in any trouble, sir!

BRANDT. (*Not quite sure of himself*) Trouble! What do you mean! I thought I sent you to town with the rest of the servants. I told you to stay there and look out for 'em!

CHARLES. (*Embarrassed*) Yes, sir. There's a train back to New York at one-fifteen in the morning—I can take it if you wish.

BRANDT. Well, I do wish! You get that train!

CHARLES. Yes, sir. (*After slight hesitation, he turns and is about to go.*)

BRANDT. See here! (*CHARLES stops*) What did you come back for? Didn't you get them all out of the house? Aren't the servants all out as I told you?

CHARLES. Yes, sir. They're all out. I took them in on the nine-forty.

BRANDT. Well, why didn't you stay there with them? What are you doing here?

CHARLES. I was afraid there was something wrong, sir—that is—I—I didn't know but you might need me, sir.

BRANDT. Oh—you thought I might need you? (*Looking at CHARLES sharply.*)

CHARLES. Well, I didn't know, sir.

BRANDT. (*After a slight pause*) That's all right. But I don't need you. (*Turning toward tea-table*) There's nothing wrong.

CHARLES. I'm very glad to hear it, sir.—I'll hurry for the train. (*Turning to go.*)

BRANDT. Oh—Charles!

CHARLES. (*Turning back*) Yes, sir.

BRANDT. Just see if my wife is upstairs.

CHARLES. Yes, sir. (*He goes quickly up the stairs to the balcony and looks off—then returns half-way down.*)

Mrs. Brandt is in her room, sir—shall I speak to her?

BRANDT. No. I only wanted to know where she is. (*CHARLES comes down stairs and moves toward door up Right.*) Wait a minute! My wife says her brother sent that bird to her. (*Indicating owl.*)

CHARLES. You mean the owl, sir?

BRANDT. Yes—that thing there. She says it came today—from her brother.

CHARLES. Yes, sir. Mr. Vosberg sent it. It came this afternoon.

BRANDT. Did he bring it himself?

CHARLES. No, sir. A man brought it on an express wagon.

BRANDT. Oh—he did, eh!

CHARLES. Yes sir.

BRANDT. What did you mean at dinner when you said there was something else in the house?

CHARLES. (*Surprised*) Said what, sir?

BRANDT. I asked you—at dinner—if the LaRose Claret was all gone.

CHARLES. Yes, sir.

BRANDT. You said it was—but there was something else in the house. Did you mean anything by that?

CHARLES. Yes, sir—I was referring to that California lot you were going to try.

BRANDT. (*Doubtfully*) You were, eh!

CHARLES. Yes, sir.

BRANDT. You didn't mean anything else?

CHARLES. Certainly not, sir.

BRANDT. Oh—(*Looks at watch.*) See here—you'll have to hurry for that train.

CHARLES. Yes, sir. (*Turns and goes out.*)

(BRANDT moves over to door up Right to see that CHARLES is off. Sound of door closing outside. BRANDT turns away, and sees the owl again. A motion of disgust as he goes down to table and sits as before.)

*Enter DOROTHY BRANDT at the top of the stairs. She looks anxiously over the balustrade at HERBERT and after a moment starts down the stairway. When she is about half way down HERBERT, hearing her, springs to his feet, grasping the revolver as before, and facing up at the same instant.)*

HERBERT. Who's there! (*DOROTHY stops on the stairway frightened.*) Oh!—it's you! (*Lowers revolver, and speaks nervously*) I—I didn't know—(*Breaks off, breathless. DOROTHY recovers herself, and stands on the stairway looking at HERBERT with anxiety.*)

DOROTHY. Why, who else could it be?

HERBERT. Who?

DOROTHY. Yes! I'm the only one in the house!

HERBERT. You're not the only one outside of the house! (*DOROTHY glances round with a slight look of alarm. Then she comes down the stairway and pauses near the*

foot of it, glancing nervously to the left again. Turns to HERBERT.)

DOROTHY. But nobody knows you've got the bonds!

HERBERT. Don't speak so loud! (*Glances down at satchel strapped to his side.*)

DOROTHY. But they don't—do they? (*Pause*) Does anyone know, Herbert?

HERBERT. (*In an undertone*) Of course someone knows!

DOROTHY. Who?

HERBERT. The men I took them from.

DOROTHY. They were officers of the law!

HERBERT. All the worse—that kind of an officer! They're out for money—that's what they're out for—and they might give me away! My mistake was in bringing the things out here at all! I ought to have stayed in town!

DOROTHY. (*Going to him*) Why, it's a great deal safer to be here—in your own house! I know it is!

HERBERT. That's what I thought—before I came. Now it looks different. I wish I'd gone to a hotel.

DOROTHY. Hotel! Why, they're full of thieves—we read of robberies in them every day!

HERBERT. Yes, but you can raise an alarm mighty quick! Suppose we 'phoned the police station here—it would take fifteen minutes to get a man!

DOROTHY. I wish you hadn't sent Charles away.

HERBERT. You never can tell about a butler! He made a remark I didn't like!

DOROTHY. But he couldn't have meant anything by that!

HERBERT. Well, I'm not going to take any chances! If there's anybody after it the first thing they'd do would be to get at the servants. That's why I got 'em all out of the house—every one of 'em! (*Moves nervously across to Right and turns. As he turns his eyes fall on the owl again.*) And that damned bird up there—I wish he was out of the house with 'em!

DOROTHY. You mean the owl?

HERBERT. That's just what I mean!

DOROTHY. Why, Eddie sent it to me!

HERBERT. Well, it's got on my nerves!

DOROTHY. But they're very rare—red ones! They're almost extinct!

HERBERT. They'd be entirely extinct if I had my way! I couldn't get away from his confounded eyes! Here—just look at him now—do you see what I mean?

DOROTHY. (*Looking at the owl with a shiver*) Oh dear, yes! (*With a sudden impulse*) Here! (*She hurries to the little stand down left and snatches up a large napkin or table cloth*) I'll cover him up! (*She throws the napkin over the owl so that it is draped in white like a ghost*) There! (*Returns*) Now it won't trouble you any more.

HERBERT. I believe that bird's a hoodoo! Your brother's trying something with us—you wait and see if he isn't!

DOROTHY. What—Eddie?

HERBERT. Yes, Eddie! You know well enough what he is!

DOROTHY. Herbert—you're too severe!

HERBERT. Anyone that treats his wife as he does—you can't be too severe!

(HERBERT *sees that he has hurt her, and goes to her quickly. Taking her in his arms.*) Here, here! For heaven's sake don't mind what I say tonight! Eddie's all right—and so is the owl—and nothing's going to happen!

DOROTHY. (*Looking up at him, and clinging to him affectionately*) No!

HERBERT. Of course not! (*Pats her affectionately*) But it's just as well for me to sit up and keep a lookout—you mustn't mind that!

DOROTHY. But you're wearing yourself out—

HERBERT. Oh, nonsense!

DOROTHY. (*Clinging to him*) Yes, you are—and it's because you're so frightfully overworked—just see what you're going through—sitting up all night to guard

that. No sleep—and no appetite—and your nerves on the rack—and revolvers about—and—and—(*Beginning to break down.*)

HERBERT. There, there! (*Affectionately*) Now don't get going, will you! It's only one night!

DOROTHY. But how do we know it won't occur again?

HERBERT. It couldn't! You see—this package of stuff I've got in here came in late—(*Indicating satchel*) from Clemons & Co. Everything was closed—I couldn't even get into the inner office where the safe is. Then I tried to find someone else with a safe who'd keep it overnight for me—but they'd all gone—there was nothing else to do!

DOROTHY. Why didn't you make Clemons & Co. take it back and send it in the morning?

HERBERT. In the morning they'll be bankrupt!

DOROTHY (*Astonished. Looks at him an instant before speaking*) Clemons & Co.!

(HERBERT *nods.*)

HERBERT. All in! If we hadn't got it tonight we'd be out over a million!

DOROTHY. A million! Do you—do you mean it's as valuable as that!

HERBERT. Sh! (*Glances round*) If a man got away with it he'd make a haul—I can tell you that! Half of it's in money! (*An idea occurs to him.*) Here! (*Taking satchel from table*) I'll strap it onto me! (*He quickly buckles satchel to his side*) They'll have to get me first—and I'll be hanged if they do that!

DOROTHY. (*Going quickly to him*) No—no!

HERBERT. (*Taking her in his arms tenderly*) Good lord—what a fool I am to be worrying you about this! The thing for you to do is to run right upstairs and go to bed—it's long after midnight.

DOROTHY. No!

HERBERT. What's the good of your sitting up?

DOROTHY. That's my place, Herbert—by your side! All the books say that—and I think it's in the marriage service too! Yes, I really think I promised to sit up with you!

HERBERT. (*Laughing*) Oh, no, you didn't—you promised to obey me—and now is your chance to do it! My orders are—(*She stops his mouth with her hand.*)

DOROTHY. No, no! Don't say it Now listen! Do you want me to keep my word about obeying? Do you?

HERBERT. Yes!

DOROTHY. Then you mustn't tell me to do anything that I won't! So now (*taking her hand away*)—if there's any disobeying you'll make me do it by giving the wrong order, and it'll be entirely your fault!

HERBERT. But what's the use of our both sitting up?

DOROTHY. There isn't any use in it—and you're the one to go to bed, because I couldn't sleep! I couldn't sleep a solitary wink, so I'll sit here and keep watch—and you can leave the revolver, because I know how to use it as you very well know— seeing I beat you three the last time! Now please go up and get a little nap!

HERBERT. There's no nap in me—don't you see that? You couldn't keep my eyes shut with a steel spring!

DOROTHY. (*An idea suddenly occurring to her*) Oh!

HERBERT. What is it? (*DOROTHY leaves him and hurries up left and opens drawer of a table. She takes out a small box and holds it up triumphantly.*)

DOROTHY. Look! Just the thing! Those sleeping tablets!

HERBERT. No—I wouldn't take any of those things to-night!

DOROTHY. (*Approaches him*) But Dr. Ackerman said they were perfectly harmless! And the one you tried last Monday gave you a beautiful night!

HERBERT. It wouldn't do it now!

DOROTHY. Then you can take more—he said there was no harm up to six!



HERBERT. (*Interrupting*) I'm not going to take any sleeping tablets tonight, Dorrie! Now don't say any more!

DOROTHY. (*Disappointed*) Oh! (*She moves slowly away with the box as if to place it where she found it. Glancing toward down left she sees the tea service and sandwiches on the little stand and walks over to it, looking at it as she does so.*) Herbert! (*Turning to him.*) You haven't eaten a thing! And I don't believe you took any tea! Did you? (*She lifts the tea pot.*)

HERBERT. What good is tea?

DOROTHY. It's lots of good!

HERBERT. Oh, well—I'll drink it if you say.

DOROTHY. And awfully strong—it's been steeping half an hour! Will you have cream?

HERBERT. No, give it to me clear.

DOROTHY. Yes, that's better for you. (*Puts the spoon on the saucer and starts toward him with the cup of tea*) You know you—(*She stops with a sudden idea*) Oh, I—(*Glances back to the tea table and then at HERBERT again with a moment's indecision.*) Wait a minute—I—I forgot the—(*Starts back toward table*) I forgot the sugar!

HERBERT. You put it in—I saw you.

DOROTHY. (*Slightly nervous.*) It was only one lump—you like two. (*Sets the cup on the table.*)

HERBERT. Oh, I don't care!

DOROTHY. Well, you must have it right! (*She picks up the box of tablets, opens it quickly and, standing with her back to HERBERT, counts out three tablets and drops them into the cup. She hesitates an instant and then takes one more out of the box and puts it into the cup. This is done very quickly.*) What's—(*Speaks a little absently.*) What's the good of having tea at all—if you don't have it—if you don't have it the right way! (*She stirs the tea quickly and takes up the cup and saucer again, turning toward HERBERT and crossing*

toward him with it.) There! (*Handing the cup to HERBERT*) I think it's—I think it's the way you want it! (*A little breathless on last few words but covering it quickly, and smiling at him pleasantly.*)

HERBERT. (*Taking the tea.*) That was a good idea of yours! Cheer a fellow up—and all that! (*He drinks tea.*)

DOROTHY. (*Slight nervousness*) Oh, yes! Is it—is it good at all?

HERBERT. (*Doubtfully. He drinks some more and sets the cup down*) I suppose it's stood too long, that's all. It has a sort of a taste like moth-balls.

DOROTHY. Now you're going to let me sit up with you a little while—aren't you?

HERBERT. All right—if you really want to!

DOROTHY. Well, I really do! Let's come round here by the fire! (*Arranges chair.*)

HERBERT. Don't turn the chair that way—I want to keep my eye on that window!

DOROTHY. (*Shivering.*) Now, Herbert! Don't let's get nervous again!

HERBERT. Well—I don't want anyone coming at me from behind, do I? (*About to sit*) See here—I'm going to take that owl off from there! (*Goes toward the owl.*) He's worse covered up than he was before!

DOROTHY. What difference can an owl make? (*HERBERT stops.*)

HERBERT. That's so! What difference can it make! I must be—(*Sits*) Dorrie, you know I was never this way before, you know that, don't you!

DOROTHY. Of course I do! (*Puts arm around his neck affectionately.*)

HERBERT. You see, when you get to thinking of the different ways they might get at you—

DOROTHY. Oh, yes! But don't let's think of it!

HERBERT. Why, coming out on the train there was a

man at the further end of the car—and—(*Pauses—a little drowsiness showing in his last few words.*)

DOROTHY. (*With some alarm, but keeping quiet*) Yes —at the end of the car—?

HERBERT. He was there, you know. And he got off when I did—and I thought he—I thought—(*Pause*) Do you know—I'm actually a little sleepy—I am, upon my word!

DOROTHY. Oh, are you?

HERBERT. (*Suddenly rising*) See here—this won't do!

DOROTHY. (*Looking up at him*) What won't do, Herbert?

HERBERT. I must shake it off! (*Tries to rouse himself.*)

DOROTHY. Oh, don't do that!

HERBERT. I tell you I must! This isn't any time for me to sleep!

DOROTHY. But a little nap would do so much good for you!

HERBERT. No, no! (*Moves about trying to rouse himself. Sits again near DOROTHY.*)

DOROTHY. If you could close your eyes for just a few moments it would make you feel so much better!

HERBERT. Do you think so?

DOROTHY. I know it! And I'll wake you up in five minutes if you say. And keep watch every second of the time! Oh, Herbert, do!

HERBERT. I suppose I might just close my eyes a minute or two! (*Rises slowly.*)

DOROTHY. (*Rising*) Oh yes! Come! (*Bringing him toward stairway.*) I'll fix you all comfortable, and put a rug over you—and then I'll come down and keep watch!

(*They are starting up the stairway together. DOROTHY stops and goes to electric button near foot of stairway and turns off light. Room is darker, now lighted with red glow of firelight.*)

HERBERT. What are you turning off the lights for?

DOROTHY. I'm going to sit in the library. I don't like to be in the hall. (*Starts up stairway.*)

HERBERT. Well, you'd better keep an eye on that window—the lock's no good!

DOROTHY. I can see it from the library just as well.

HERBERT. (*Turning and going up.*) Oh, all right! Isn't it odd how sleepy I got—all of a sudden!

DOROTHY. (*Following HERBERT up the stairs*) That's often the way! You know you're always sleepy at night the minute you open a book!

(*HERBERT and DOROTHY exit at the top of the stairs. Short pause. Loud ticking of clock, very slow swing of pendulum. A faint knock at the door to the left—pause. The knock is repeated a little louder but still subdued. After another brief pause EDWARD VOSBERG appears outside the window up left and is seen cautiously looking in. He soon begins to work at the lock or catch of the window, slipping a table knife in and about. After a moment or two the lock or catch springs back with a rather loud click. He pauses briefly, then carefully and noiselessly opens the window and comes into the room. After a glance about he turns back to the window, throws the knife out through it, and closes the sash, carefully adjusting the lock or catch as it was. Then he turns and looks cautiously about, advancing a little, glancing up the stairway, listening for sounds from above, etc. He is in evening dress, wearing an overcoat of fashionable cut, silk hat, etc. He has gloves on, wears patent-leather shoes and carries a cane. His face is rather repulsive, showing marks of dissipation. After satisfying himself that no one has heard him come in, he goes quickly down to the little table and looks about on it for something. Lights a match and looks again. Picks up the box of tablets with the evident satisfaction of finding what he is looking for, and examines it closely*)

*by the light of the match. Puts the box down again, shields match-flame with hands and crosses to the table. Holds burning match close to cup and looks sharply down into it, examining the dregs carefully. Blows out match and throws it away. Stands thinking an instant. Then turns and goes up above table, takes off opera hat and places it on mantel. Takes out cigarette-case and lights a cigarette; stands puffing it. While doing so his eyes light upon the draped owl. He takes the cigarette out of his mouth and stands staring at it in surprise. Then he goes over and looks at it closely.)*

VOSBERG. Ha, ha ha! They didn't like it! (*Looks about the room again as if for an explanation of the phenomenon. His eyes are arrested by something on the table. He goes over and sees that it is a revolver, and picks it up. Examines it, puffing cigarette as he does so, turning the barrel to see if it is loaded, etc. He glances up the stairway. Then he knocks lightly on the table with the revolver. Waits a moment. Glances up stairway. Goes to stairway and knocks lightly on newel-post. Goes back to table, putting revolver on it and moves over near fire.*

DOROTHY *appears at the top of the stairway, much frightened, and looking fearfully about to see where the noise came from. After pausing a moment, she comes cautiously down the stairs, holding her hand tight against her left side as if the beating of her heart were painful. After a slight hesitation she reaches the floor. Just as she does so she sees VOSBERG and starts back with a stifled scream, clinging to the newel post for support.)*

DOROTHY. Oh—who's that!

VOSBERG. Hullo.

DOROTHY. Oh, Eddie! How you frightened me!

VOSBERG. Anything wrong?

DOROTHY. Wrong! What do you mean?

VOSBERG. I mean wrong. What's the matter with you?

DOROTHY. Why, you startled me so! I'd no idea you were here!

VOSBERG. Well, I am.—I'm here all right. (*Slight pause*) (*Indicating owl*) What's the matter with that?

DOROTHY. (*Slightly startled*) Oh—what?

VOSBERG. That bird I sent you. Was he cold?

DOROTHY. (*Not understanding*) Cold?

VOSBERG. Yes. You've covered him up, I see!

DOROTHY. Oh yes—we—we—

VOSBERG. Maybe you didn't like his looks!

DOROTHY. Why—you see, his eyes were so—so strange—

VOSBERG. (*With a slight grin*) Made you nervous, eh?

DOROTHY. A—a little.

(VOSBERG sneers and turns away.)

How did you get in? Did you open the window again?

VOSBERG. Of course.

DOROTHY. Oh! (*As if her feelings were hurt*) I asked you not to!

VOSBERG. Well—I knocked a long while and nobody heard. I couldn't camp out on the porch all night, could I?

(DOROTHY goes to the electric button and turns on the lights.)

VOSBERG. I've been waiting out there about ten minutes!

(DOROTHY turns quickly and stands facing VOSBERG.)

DOROTHY. Ten—ten minutes?

VOSBERG. Somewhere around there. It might be more—it might be less.

DOROTHY. At the—at the window?

VOSBERG. (*Nods ill-humoredly*) Yes! That one right there—in plain sight! And I saw a thing or two!

(VOSBERG walks over to DOROTHY and stands close to her, looking into her face.)

Say, you're not trying any little thing yourself, are you?

DOROTHY. (*Breathlessly*) I don't know what you mean!

VOSBERG. Don't you though!

DOROTHY. No!

VOSBERG. (*Turning away*) Oh, well—it's nothing special. Only if there was something I'd like to be in on the deal!

(DOROTHY *stands looking at him, not understanding.*)

DOROTHY. In on the deal?

(VOSBERG *strolls to small table and picks up the box of tablets.*)

VOSBERG. (*Carelessly*) Candy, I suppose?

DOROTHY. No—they're sleeping tablets. Dr. Ackerman gave them to us!

VOSBERG. (*With a gesture up the stairway*) Well, you gave them to him all right! (*Strolls back to table and tosses the box down on it*) You shoved in four or five—unless I saw crooked!

DOROTHY. Why, they're perfectly harmless—you know they are!

(VOSBERG *picks up the teacup and glances into it carelessly.*)

VOSBERG. Say, take a hint from me! You'd better rinse that out! (*He puts cup down again.*)

DOROTHY. He was very nervous and tired—it was absolutely necessary for him to sleep!

VOSBERG. Well, I don't want to disturb him, do I! I know well enough he doesn't want to see me!

DOROTHY. Oh, Eddie—(*Going to him*) if you could only see what a life you're leading—and how hard it is for Mary!

VOSBERG. (*Looks down a moment*) I see well enough! You don't have to tell me!

DOROTHY. (*Hand on his shoulder.*) That's what Herbert can't endure! He doesn't mind my helping you—really he doesn't.

VOSBERG. He doesn't mind, eh?

DOROTHY. No.

VOSBERG. Then I wish to God you'd help me now. It might mean a lot to Mary and me.

DOROTHY. What can I do? I haven't any—you know my allowance—

VOSBERG. (*Interrupting*) It isn't money. Dorrie—I see a chance to make a new deal all around!

(DOROTHY *looks at him.*)

I know what I am—and how I treat Mary and all. I want to pull up and reform the worst way! I don't suppose you'll believe me, but I do!

DOROTHY. Oh, I will believe you! And if you'll only reform and—and—

VOSBERG. Well, I can do it—if you'll help me a little! And it won't be any trouble for you either!

DOROTHY. (*Eagerly*) Tell me what it is!

VOSBERG. It's a chance to make enough money so I can leave the Street—and get quit of all the things that drag me down—all the boys—all the places that tempt me—and live a decent life.

DOROTHY. But what can I do?

VOSBERG. You can tell me something—that's all—tell me something I want to know! Will you *do* it?

DOROTHY. Why, of course I will—if I can!

VOSBERG. Well, you can all right!—He's got a lot of bonds here—you needn't be alarmed—I just happened to know about it—no one else does.

DOROTHY. Yes?

VOSBERG. They'll be thrown on the market tomorrow. If I could find out the dates and the numbers I could play the allied stocks before the slump and make enough to pull out on and never speculate again! If I can get hold of enough to make us comfortably off, I'll quit the whole game—upon my soul I will! Now don't answer me till you think of it! It's a thing he approves of and does himself!

DOROTHY. No—no! He doesn't!



VOSBERG. Yes, he does! I can prove it to you! He'll be in it himself for all he's worth in the morning! All I want to know are the dates and numbers on those bonds!

DOROTHY. But you ought to find this out from Herbert! He's the one to—

VOSBERG. (*Interrupting*) Now don't be foolish! You know I can't ask him! He wouldn't tell me anyway! It's such a little thing! You might do it for Marv if not for me! Here!—(*Suddenly recollecting*) This is a note from her asking you to. (*Hands her a note*) Just look it over! You'll see it means a lot to both of us!

(*DOROTHY takes the note and reads it. After looking at it she raises her eyes to VOSBERG.*)

DOROTHY. You want the dates and numbers on the— on the bonds?

VOSBERG. Yes. You can get a look at 'em, can't you?

DOROTHY. I can if he's asleep.

VOSBERG. Oh, he's asleep all right!

(*DOROTHY turns and slowly goes up the stairway. When a little way up she stops and turns to him.*)

DOROTHY. How many numbers are there?

VOSBERG. There ought to be about fifteen.

DOROTHY. But I can't remember as many as that!

VOSBERG. (*With assumed carelessness*) Oh—bring the bunch down then!

(*DOROTHY looks suddenly at him.*)

You needn't bring 'em here—just read 'em to me from the head of the stairs!

(*DOROTHY turns and goes up the stairway, disappearing at the top. Loud ticking of clock.*)

VOSBERG *watches her until she disappears. Then he turns quickly back into the room and goes to the door left which he unlocks and opens and closes to see that it is ready for a hasty exit. Then he goes to the table and hastily examines the revolver again. Hearing*

DOROTHY *coming, he crosses and waits near foot of stairs.* DOROTHY *appears at top of the stairway with a large packet in her hand tied with heavy red tape, and sealed in several places. She comes down to the landing and looks at VOSBERG.*)

VOSBERG. Well? Aren't you going to tell me what they are?

DOROTHY. I can't find anything on the outside.

VOSBERG. They must be there! (*Moves a little nearer.*)

(DOROTHY *looks at the package again.*)

DOROTHY. You said dates, didn't you?

VOSBERG. Dates and numbers! I want 'em both!

DOROTHY. There's some figures here.

VOSBERG. But I want the dates! (*Moves a little nearer while she is looking at the papers.*)

DOROTHY. There aren't any!

VOSBERG. Hold it up and let me see!

(DOROTHY *holds the packet up so that VOSBERG may look at it. He is now quite near her.*)

(*As if trying to make out what is on the packet*) Why, there they are! (*Pointing to the packet.*)

DOROTHY. (*Looking quickly at packet again*) Where?

VOSBERG. (*Edging nearer*) Under that last line of figures!

DOROTHY. (*Coming down a step or two to get better light—looking intently at bonds*) The last line?

VOSBERG. Yes!—Here! You're looking in the wrong place! (*He suddenly springs up within reach and seizes the packet out of her hands with a quick wrench.*) Let me show you! (*He goes back down the stairs into the room.*)

DOROTHY. (*Instantly following after him with outstretched hands*) No—no—no!

VOSBERG. (*Moving away from her above the table*) Let me show you, I say! (*Pushes her off.*)

DOROTHY. (*Following VOSBERG and trying to get the*

*package away*) Give it back to me! Give it back to me!

VOSBERG. (*Backing away and throwing her off as she seizes his arms*) Keep away! I'll give it back in a minute!

DOROTHY. (*Following him madly and grasping at his arms or hands or the package.*) No, now! I want it now! What do you mean?

VOSBERG. (*Throwing her off roughly*) I mean I've got it and you'd better keep quiet! (*Stands scowling at her*)

(DOROTHY stands suddenly motionless near stairway looking at him.)

DOROTHY. (*After pause. Intensely but in low tone.*) Now I know what you are! (*After a slight pause*) Now I know you!

VOSBERG. (*Scowling at her*) You do, eh! (*Putting the packet securely in his overcoat pocket.*)

DOROTHY. Yes—I do! I knew you were a drunkard and a gambler—and a beat! I knew you neglected your wife and lived a life of shame and infamy! Now I know that you're a thief—and a robber—and a convict!

VOSBERG. Anything more?

DOROTHY. (*Coming down to chair right of table*) Nothing but this! If you give that back to me at once I'll debase myself so far as to say nothing! If you don't, I'll expose you!

VOSBERG. You won't expose me in a hurry, my dear!—Look at that stuff you gave him! You're hardly the one to speak!

DOROTHY. Well, I will speak! (*Moving back toward the stairway*) I'll call him this instant! (*She turns and starts toward the stairs as if to call.*)

VOSBERG. (*Not too loud*) Wait!

(DOROTHY stops and turns.)

One little thing before you do that! One little thing!

DOROTHY. (*Breathlessly*) What!

(VOSBERG *quietly picks up the revolver from table.*)

VOSBERG. This is loaded—*isn't* it!

DOROTHY. What if it is!

VOSBERG. Nothing. Only I thought I'd tell you—as it is loaded you'd better not call him, just now! Do you get the idea?

DOROTHY. You—you— (*A dazed motion toward the revolver.*)

VOSBERG. If he shows his head in this room he'll get a bullet in it!

(*Pause.*)

D'ye spose I'd stop for him with a couple o' millions at stake!

(*Pause.*)

You're not quite so anxious to call him, I see!

Well—(*Moving as if to cross to door down left and still keeping the revolver*) I haven't time to—

DOROTHY. (*With a sudden subdued scream*) Oh— (*Springs to door left and stands before it*) You shan't go!

(VOSBERG *pauses.*)

VOSBERG. You'd better be a little careful!

DOROTHY. You'll have to kill me first!

VOSBERG. I don't want to have any trouble with you!

DOROTHY. You will have trouble with me!

As long as I'm alive you shan't get out of this house—as long as I'm alive!

VOSBERG. (*Handling the revolver threateningly*) See here! I wouldn't stop for you either!

DOROTHY. Shoot me! Shoot me dead! I hope you will! At least he'll know I tried to stop you!

(*Instant's pause.*)

VOSBERG. Oh, here! (*Puts revolver in right hand. overcoat pocket*) I guess I can handle a woman without that! (*Strides to her quickly and seizing her in a*

*rough grip, drags her back towards center. She struggles to hold him.)*

DOROTHY. You shan't! You shan't go!

VOSBERG. Let go!—Let go, I tell you!

DOROTHY. (*Clinging to him*) You shan't go! You shan't!

(VOSBERG gets her to center and makes a sudden turn coming to left of her and trying to get away. She gives a sharp subdued cry and clings desperately to him, holding him back.)

VOSBERG. (*Striking her arms and hands*) Let go! Let go or I'll hit you in the face! (*He suddenly throws her off, sending her against the table to which she clings half falling. He turns with an imprecation and starts towards the door at left. There is a loud knock at the door left. VOSBERG stops motionless. DOROTHY straightens up, slowly listening. Her face shows only blank surprise. It is too soon for hope.*)

VOSBERG. Who's that! (*Turning partly toward DOROTHY.*) Who'd be coming here now!

DOROTHY. (*Coming close to him quickly*) Whoever it is—whoever it is, I'll expose you—unless you give that back this instant!

VOSBERG. (*Taking out revolver*) Whoever it is I'll blow the head off him if he gets in my way!

(*A tremendous rapping on the door at L. as if it were struck with a heavy club.*)

VOSBERG stands with the revolver in his right hand pressed close to his right side so that it could not be seen from the door.

DOROTHY backs away from him a step or two coming against the table.)

VOSBERG. (*Voice of loud bravado*) Come in!

(*Enter a POLICEMAN at the door left.*)

(*The three stand motionless an instant regarding each other.*)

POLICEMAN. I beg your pardon, ma'am—is everything all right here?

DOROTHY. A—all—right—?

POLICEMAN. Yes ma'am. We had a call down at the station.

DOROTHY. A—a call?

POLICEMAN. Yes, ma'am. I was the only one in except the Captain, so I came along to see what it was.

DOROTHY. Oh—I see. Yes.

(POLICEMAN glances about the room.)

VOSBERG. (*Who has quietly slipped the revolver into his right overcoat pocket on seeing the POLICEMAN, moves near DOROTHY and speaks to her in a quick aside*)  
Don't give me away! You can have that packet!

DOROTHY. (*Aside to vosBERG*) When?

VOSBERG. As soon as I can get it out!

DOROTHY. You promise?

VOSBERG. Yes, yes! Send him away!

POLICEMAN. I daresay it's all right around here.

DOROTHY. Oh yes—it's all right!

POLICEMAN. No—no strangers in the house?

(DOROTHY gives a quick glance back at vosBERG, turning instantly to the POLICEMAN again.)

DOROTHY. Oh, no! There's no—there's no trouble at all!

POLICEMAN. You didn't hear anybody at any of the windows?

DOROTHY. Hear anybody! Why, no!

(*The POLICEMAN watches DOROTHY closely.*)

Did you—did you—?

POLICEMAN. We heard there was a man getting in here.

DOROTHY. Why, who—who told you?

POLICEMAN. It was Mr. Travers, ma'am, J. B. Travers. He phoned us from his house.

DOROTHY. Phoned you?

POLICEMAN. Yes'm. He was on his way home in an auto, an' he thought he saw a man getting in here.

DOROTHY. Oh—Yes. Well, I—I'm very much obliged indeed!

POLICEMAN. You're the lady, I suppose? You live here?

DOROTHY. Yes—I'm Mrs. Brandt.

POLICEMAN. And—(*Indicating* vosBERG.) Mr. Brandt, I suppose?

DOROTHY. No—Mr. Brandt is up-stairs asleep. This is my brother Mr. Vosberg.

(POLICEMAN *looks sharply at* vosBERG.)

POLICEMAN. Oh, I see. Your brother.

Mr. Vosberg lives here, does he?

VOSBERG. (*Breaking in easily and naturally, and approaching a step or two toward the* POLICEMAN) No, I live in town—197 West 84th. I was only making a call.

POLICEMAN. You'll excuse my asking all this? I only want to make sure it's all right before I go.

VOSBERG & DOROTHY. Oh certainly!—Of course—Yes—we're very much obliged.

POLICEMAN. Not at all, ma'am—that's my business. And you're sure you didn't hear anyone at any of the windows?

DOROTHY & VOSBERG. (*With great certainty*) No!—Oh no!—No one at all!

(POLICEMAN *looks sharply at them.*)

POLICEMAN. Well, I think I'll just take a look about before I go—then we can rest easy. (*He starts as if to move up left. A glance of alarm from* vosBERG.)

DOROTHY. (*With a movement toward* POLICEMAN) Oh, but I—I—

(POLICEMAN *stops and stands looking at her.*)

I hope you won't disturb my husband!

POLICEMAN. What's the matter with him? Is he sick?

DOROTHY. No—but he's very tired! Very tired indeed! It's the first sleep he's had for several nights!

POLICEMAN. Oh—that's the way it is!

DOROTHY. Yes—I'm really very anxious about him!

POLICEMAN. Well—of course it would be a pity to disturb him if he's tired—(*Glances up toward stairway*)

He's up-stairs, you say—in that part of the house?

DOROTHY. Y—yes.

POLICEMAN. Well. I suppose it won't do any harm for me to have a look at this window? (*Indicating window up left.*)

DOROTHY. (*Doubtfully*) No.

POLICEMAN. (*Going to window*) Not if I do it as quiet as possible? (*He begins to examine the window.*)

DOROTHY. (*Quick aside to VOSBERG*) If you don't give it back I'll tell him!

VOSBERG. I'm going to! I'll put it on the stairs!

DOROTHY. Then do it!

(*POLICEMAN turns at window and looks at them.*)

POLICEMAN. There's someone been fooling with this window, ma'am.

DOROTHY. (*Turning quickly*) Fooling with it!

POLICEMAN. Yes, ma'am. They've pushed a knife or something up through and pried the bolt back.

VOSBERG. (*Coming center. Speaks in an easy jolly sort of way*) Oh, see here, Sergeant, I'll have to tell you—you're going so devilish far, you know! It was only a little joke of mine and we thought it was all right to keep quiet about it! The fact is I got in that window myself!

POLICEMAN. Oh—you got in there!

VOSBERG. Yes—you see I came up here late and they were both upstairs, and I couldn't make 'em hear, so I opened the window with my knife and came in. I did it more as a joke than anything else! Now I'm infernally ashamed it caused all this trouble—I am, upon my word—and I'd like to square it with you some way—(*Moves toward POLICEMAN, at the same time putting hand in his pocket for money.*) just to show there's no ill feeling!



POLICEMAN. (*Motioning VOSBERG back.*) Wait a minute.

(*DOROTHY is watching VOSBERG like a cat.*)

POLICEMAN. That's right, is it, ma'am?

(*DOROTHY does not answer. Her eyes are on VOSBERG.*)

(*VOSBERG looks round at her to see why she will not speak.*)

(*Repeating.*) He was right about coming in that window was he, ma'am?

VOSBERG. (*Pretending to be very indignant.*) Look here! I said I came in that window! Can't you take my word for it?

POLICEMAN. (*Good humoredly.*) Sure!—But I'd like the lady's word, too!

VOSBERG. (*Turning to DOROTHY.*) What's the matter? Aren't you going to tell him?

DOROTHY. (*Her eyes on VOSBERG meaningly.*) Yes. I'll tell him everything that occurred—if you wish me to!

VOSBERG. (*Quickly.*) You know I came in that way! Can't you tell him?

DOROTHY. Yes—I know he came in that way!

VOSBERG. (*To POLICEMAN.*) Of course she does! You want to be a little more careful about doubting a gentleman's word! You're getting entirely too officious—that's what you are!

(*The POLICEMAN stands watching him.*)

We don't need you any longer here—nobody's in the house that doesn't belong in it—and everything's perfectly safe!

POLICEMAN. See here, young man, what have you got that gun in your pocket for?

VOSBERG. (*After an instant's pause.*) Gun!

POLICEMAN. Yes. (*With a careless motion towards VOSBERG's right hand overcoat pocket.*) There in your pocket. Take it out.

VOSBERG. (*As if suddenly remembering.*) Oh, this! (*He takes out revolver.*)

POLICEMAN. You ought not to carry those things around like that! What are you doing with it?

VOSBERG. Nothing at all! It was on that table when I came in and I picked it up and put it in my pocket just for a joke.

POLICEMAN. This must be your night for joking. Whose is it?

VOSBERG. Mr. Brandt's. (*Holding it toward the POLICEMAN.*) You can see his name on the plate.

POLICEMAN. Does that belong to your husband, Ma'am?

DOROTHY. Yes. It belongs to my husband.

POLICEMAN. (*To VOSBERG.*) And you found it on that table, you say?

VOSBERG. That's what I said!

POLICEMAN. Well, go and put it back on the table where you found it.

(*VOSBERG looks at POLICEMAN an instant and then goes slowly to the table and tosses the revolver down upon it carelessly.*)

POLICEMAN. Now move away a little.

VOSBERG. (*Looks at POLICEMAN.*) Move away?

POLICEMAN. Yes.

(*VOSBERG moves sullenly toward center.*)

A little further if you don't mind!

VOSBERG. (*Breaking out indignantly.*) What do you mean by giving me orders like this!

POLICEMAN. (*To DOROTHY.*) What was your husband doing with a revolver—out here on the table tonight?

(*Pause.*)

Was he cleaning it or repairing it?

DOROTHY. He was not.

POLICEMAN. Was he playing with it?

DOROTHY. No.

POLICEMAN. Well, what did he have it out for?

DOROTHY. For safety.

POLICEMAN. Safety!

DOROTHY. Yes. (*She looks at VOSBERG.*)

POLICEMAN. From what?

DOROTHY. From thieves or robbers.

POLICEMAN. Was he expecting anything like that?

DOROTHY. He was afraid they might come.

POLICEMAN. Why? Did he have money with him?

DOROTHY. He had a package of something—money or bonds—I'm not sure which—but so valuable that he sat up until half an hour ago guarding it.

POLICEMAN. What did he do then?

DOROTHY. He was so worn out that he finally went up stairs to get a little sleep.

POLICEMAN. Did he take the money with him?

(*DOROTHY looks at VOSBERG. VOSBERG has been standing motionless listening. He now slowly moves his arm as if to get something out of his inside overcoat pocket. While doing so he darts a sharp glance at the window*)  
Did he take the package of money with him, Mrs. Brandt?

(*VOSBERG tosses package of bonds quietly down on a lower step of the stairway.*)

DOROTHY. (*Watching VOSBERG.*) Yes—he took it with him.

(*VOSBERG cautiously gets the package again, endeavoring to slip it under his coat unobserved.*)

POLICEMAN. Is it up there now?

(*Pause. DOROTHY sees that VOSBERG has taken the package of bonds from the stairway.*)

DOROTHY. No—it is not up there now!

POLICEMAN. (*Quickly.*) Where is it?

(*Pause. DOROTHY looks at VOSBERG.*)

Where is that package now, Mrs. Brandt?

(*DOROTHY does not answer.*)

(*POLICEMAN after a second's pause, glances round at the door left, but instantly turns back again, keeping his eyes on VOSBERG and DOROTHY. He then quietly backs*

*to the door and reaching behind him gets hold of the key out of the lock and puts it in his pocket. All this without taking his eyes from VOSBERG and DOROTHY.)*

POLICEMAN. Mr. Brandt's asleep upstairs, you say?

*(DOROTHY makes no reply.)*

*(POLICEMAN gets his whistle.)*

I'd better give him a call and see what he's got to say about this. *(Blows his whistle.)*

*(Pause.)*

Your husband seems to be a pretty sound sleeper, Mrs. Brandt. *(He blows his whistle again, this time making several short blasts in rapid succession.)*

*(Pause.)*

I'm sorry to inconvenience you, Mrs. Brandt, but I'll have to take a look up there. *(He walks to the foot of the stairs keeping his eyes on VOSBERG and DOROTHY. At the foot of the stairs he makes a quick turn about, swings round so that VOSBERG and the door are not out of his sight, and stands an instant glancing quickly from VOSBERG to DOROTHY, showing that he has them both in sight.)*

POLICEMAN. *(At foot of stairs.)* I'm only going half way up. I ought to be able to make him hear—if he's still alive!

DOROTHY. *(Quick gasp.)* Alive!

POLICEMAN. *(Turning to her almost on the word.)* He isn't dead, is he?

DOROTHY. No no!—you don't understand!

POLICEMAN. *(Moving up the stairway sidewise so that he keeps VOSBERG and DOROTHY in view.)* No—I don't understand, Mrs. Brandt—but I will in a minute!

*(With his eyes still on them he raps violently with his club on the balustrade. Slight pause. He taps again, making a terrific noise.)*

HERBERT. *(Off.)* What is it? What's the matter?

POLICEMAN. *(Loud voice.)* Is that you, Mr. Brandt?

HERBERT. Yes!

POLICEMAN. Come down here quick!

HERBERT. (*Loud cry.*) Here! It's gone! (*Coming nearer.*) Dorrie! —(*Close to entrance at top of stairway.*) Great God!

POLICEMAN. (*Turning his head an instant to speak to HERBERT.*) Don't stop to talk—if you—

(*VOSBERG makes a sudden rush and plunges through the window up L. taking the sash and glass with him in a loud crash. Instantly on the crash DOROTHY screams and seizing the revolver from the table darts across the room and plunges out through the window up left after VOSBERG. The POLICEMAN runs down the stairs and across to door left, taking the key out of his pocket as he does so, and shoving it quickly into keyhole, unlocks and opens door, raising his whistle at the same time. HERBERT enters at top of stairway as POLICEMAN runs across to the door, and comes down the stairway so that he is in plain sight on the landing as POLICEMAN pulls the door open to run out.*)

HERBERT. (*In loud voice.*) Stop! Stop, I say!

(*POLICEMAN turns hurriedly at the door.*)

What are you doing there?

POLICEMAN. They've got it! They've run with it!

HERBERT. Who?

POLICEMAN. Your wife and a crook! (*Turning as if to dash out at door.*)

HERBERT. (*Voice of thunder.*) You're a liar!

POLICEMAN. (*Turning back to HERBERT.*) Well, if it wasn't your wife, then there's a pair of 'em—and they've robbed you!

HERBERT. Robbed me! (*He comes down the stairs.*)

POLICEMAN. Didn't you have something? Tell me quick!

HERBERT. (*A wild glance about.*) My wife!

POLICEMAN. Then it was her! I'll just whistle up the roundsman!

HERBERT. No you won't!

(*POLICEMAN turns back to him.*)

Don't you dare blow that whistle!

POLICEMAN. (*Roughly.*) What do you mean?

HERBERT. Don't blow it—that's all!

POLICEMAN. Hasn't she got something of yours?

HERBERT. No!

POLICEMAN. I can't hold 'em unless you tell me! —  
Hasn't she run off with something?

HERBERT. Not a thing!

(POLICEMAN *stands nonplussed, looking at* HERBERT.

HERBERT *turns away with a look of agony, puts his hand to his head as if half stupid. Sees the tea-cup on the table. Suddenly forgetting the* POLICEMAN *he goes to it quickly and picking it up looks eagerly in the bottom of it.*)

(*Half to himself.*) My God!

POLICEMAN. (*Instantly pointing to the cup.*) Ah ha  
—she doped you!

HERBERT. (*Quickly recovering himself.*) No!

POLICEMAN. (*Advancing toward* HERBERT *with quick stride.*) Give me that cup!

(HERBERT *dashes the cup violently to the floor. The* POLICEMAN *stands an instant looking at* HERBERT. *Suddenly he runs to the table and seizes the box of tablets.*)

What's this?

(HERBERT *knocks the box out of* POLICEMAN's *hand before he can look at it, and it falls to the floor, breaking and spilling white tablets over the carpet.*)

POLICEMAN. (*Seeing the tablets on the floor.*) That's enough for me! (*He turns and runs to the door left putting whistle to his mouth as he reaches it. He pulls the door open and is about to whistle when two shots ring out in quick succession outside in distance. The* POLICEMAN *backs a step into the room and turns front listening.*) Worse than I thought! She had the gun—but he might a' got it away from her! (*Turns to* HERBERT.) You stay here—I'll see to this! (POLICE-

MAN hurries off. An instant after his exit, his whistle for help is heard outside, several times.

There is a pause. Then the sound of quick light steps outside left. Enter DOROTHY at window torn and soiled—with the package in her hand. She staggers toward HERBERT.)

DOROTHY. Herbert! Herbert!

HERBERT. Dorothy! (He runs toward her and catches her in his arms.) Dorothy—what is it!

DOROTHY. (Holding out the packet blindly. Breathless. Gasping.) I've got it! You see! . . . I've got it! Here it is! Here it is, Herbert! (Falls into his arms.)

HERBERT. My darling! (Taking the packet, but still holding her close.) You shot him!

DOROTHY. It was Eddie!

HERBERT. (Astounded.) What! (Turning and looking off left at same instant.)

DOROTHY. He snatched it away from me! He was running with it! What could I do!

HERBERT. My God! If you've killed him!

DOROTHY. (Subdued cry of horror.) Oh, no!  
(Both stand looking off to left.)

(Brief pause.)

(Enter the POLICEMAN.)

HERBERT. (Breathless.) Well?

POLICEMAN. It's all right, sir—he's hardly hurt at all!

HERBERT. Thank heaven! (Holds DOROTHY close.)

DOROTHY. (With a cry of relief.) Oh! (Buries her face on HERBERT'S breast.)

POLICEMAN. But she stopped him nice—I will say that. It took him in the foot! You won't have any trouble about this—but I'll have to stay here till you explain how it is to the Captain.

HERBERT. Stay! I hope you'll stay all night, Sergeant!

POLICEMAN. Well, it's near that now!

DOROTHY. Herbert! Can you forgive me!

HERBERT. Forgive you! (Folds her in his arms. As

*he holds her he suddenly sees the owl.) I'll forgive you all right—but I'll be hanged if I'll have that damned bird around here! (He goes toward the Owl.)*

DOROTHY. *(Following him.)* Oh, no! Do get rid of it!  
(HERBERT *throws the OWL into the fire. There is a flare of flame. DOROTHY falls into his arms again.*)

CURTAIN.



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